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Frederic Tudor – Ice King

THE business papers of Frederic Tudor, who for half a century was known throughout the country as the Ice King, have recently been deposited in Baker Library by his grandson, also a Frederic Tudor. These business records comprise the story of one of the most unique business enterprises ever undertaken. The material includes account books, letter books, and unbound letters so absorbing in their interest that it is hard to turn away from them.

Frederic Tudor, born in 1783, belonged to that generation so characterized by undaunted youthful endeavor. His early training was in the counting house of Major William Sullivan. The first letter in the oldest of the letter books was written in 1804 to Major Sullivan on the occasion of Mr. Tudor's withdrawal from his position in the counting house. His plans, he states, are to establish himself as an independent merchant. At this time he was twenty-one. At twenty-three he was launching his ice business.

When one ventures into a new field of business, one must expect to be called upon to solve countless and diverse problems; there are no predecessors who have paved the way by developing the necessary technique. This was exactly the situation in which Frederic Tudor found himself in connection with his gigantic project.

He was forced to study the methods of transporting ice, building ice houses, and preserving ice in the home—all involving technical problems which required engineering knowledge. Many experiments were needed to perfect the plans. Then came the problem of marketing. He had to create a want which the people had not

yet experienced — no easy task for a youngster. He demonstrated the beneficial use of ice in hospitals and its value in preserving foods. He taught the people how much more refreshing cold drinks were than those unchilled by selling both at the same price. He introduced ice creams into places where the people had never heard of them. The administration of these activities required a person of tremendous drive and one capable of undiminished enthusiasm. Such a person was Frederic Tudor.

Organizing his plan in 1806, he soon succeeded in introducing ice to most of the islands of the West Indies. The period of the Embargo and the War of 1812 proved disastrous, but after the war, renewed effort built up the business to a flourishing state. Again, the depression of 1819-1821 affected the trade, but in the face of such discouragement new houses were opened in New Orleans and other southern cities. By 1835 he was shipping ice to Calcutta. At one time he had ice houses in Havana, Jamaica, New Orleans, Charleston, Mobile, Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Galle, and Singapore.

His letters are excellent and show better than anything else the character of the man. Below are transcripts of three letters written at widely different periods in his life. The first illustrates his initial enthusiasm coupled with sagacious planning. The second indicates that he did not have clear sailing from the inception of the idea. Here, after seventeen years of ceaseless effort, he finds himself faced with bankruptcy. The third letter shows that he had not been overpowered, even by the greatest obstacles — that he had succeeded, and was still, at the age of sixty-nine, capable of the same farsighted planning.

Boston, Dec^r 10th 1805

My Dear Cousin

I embrace the opportunity of M^r Boit of communicating to you a scheme which I had hoped of opening to you personally, but by your late letters will not be here in season.

William & myself have formed a plan of carrying *Ice* to the west Indies & have associated with us your Brother James who with William sailed for Martinique on the 2^d of november. Their object is to obtain of the different colonial governments an exclusive privilege of carrying the article to the several Islands & calculate to obtain the desired privilege from most of the Windward Islands governments & finally Jamaica but it will be out of their power to visit Cuba.



Frederic Tuck

The idea of carrying ice to tropical climates will at first no doubt startle & astonish you but when you take into consideration the following circumstances I think you will cease to doubt the practicability of the thing & adopt the proposal I shall presently make to you.

"The captain of an American ship in London during peace time could obtain no freight or employ for his vessel some one said to him in jest what he took in earnest — "we have had a mild winter & there is no ice in the Icehouses suppose you go to Norway for a cargo." He did & arrived at London with a full cargo & realized a very handsome profit notwithstanding he was detained a long time in settling with the custom-house on account of duties.

"Ice has been frequently found to go on the ends of boards safely to the west indies without thawing during the voyage." This is a very remarkable fact because the ice so situated must have been very much exposed in the damp hold of a vessel loaded with green boards.

"Ice-creams were carried to Trinidad by the English when they were in possession of that Island in pots packed in sand from Europe."

"Ice is carried every year to S. Eustatius & preserved there."

Since W & J sailed I have the following fact from W. Codman lately arrived from Lima which lies in latitude about 12°. He says that ice is to be had there at all times at the retail price of about 2 rials or 25 cts p^r lb. This is brought from the mountains & monopolized by the King.

The above are the principal grounds by which we have been induced to engage in this enterprize & are the result of unremitted research for the last four months & may be relied on as correct.

William & James intend to solicit the governments in the following manner accommodating to circumstances: which should you enter into the scheme may be a guide in soliciting the Spanish government. They go out under very favorable recommendations & being the bearers of a despatch from the French consul I hope will succeed.

The plan is first to solicit the French government at Martinique for an exclusive privilege of carrying ice there for ten years.

If they refuse to grant any exclusive privilege of themselves they intend to ask if they will do so untill further orders from home.

If they will not allow us to import exclusively will they let us build ice-houses & no one else.

And finally if they refuse every direct exclusive profit, they intend to demand if the government will do anything to encourage the enterprise, otherwise it must fall to the ground.

Thus you have the whole of our plan — if we succeed we realize immense fortunes. If we fail, which is next to an impossibility, the loss is trifling. By calculation the ice will cost us there not much over a cent a pound!

The plan is so far executed that I have already purchased a fine Brig in which I shall sail with a load of ice soon after I hear from William &

James. The cost of the vessel & outfits including the ice will not stand me in more than 6 to 7 thousand doll^r.

The Island of Cuba is too important to overlook & is worth for this object at least half of the rest of the west Indies I therefore propose to you to solicit of the government of that Island the exclusive privilege of carrying ice to Havana & other parts of Cuba & either take with us one half conces^a if the said privilege is obtained or if disliking the plan be paid one thousand dollars for obtaining the privilege for us you notifying the same in letter in answer to this.

You will understand me to mean. We wish you to procure from the gov^t of Cuba a grant exclusive in which we offer you either to take a conces^a of half or procure the privilege for us & we engage to pay you one thousand dollars with reasonable charges, in obtaining it you however to determine which you will do & write to that effect as early as possible.

I will not comment further respecting this scheme of ours but I do not hesitate to declare that three times ten thousand dollars would not tempt me for a moment to give up my part in it & I will only add that after explaining the plan & shewing the manner I intended to pack the ice in the vessel to a gentleman who makes natural philosophy his study he gave his opinion decidedly in favor of the scheme.

You will of course in soliciting the Spanish government be as secret as possible for otherwise it is possible some enterprising Yankee may catch the idea & superceed your plans.

I conclude with reiterating to you that this scheme is not the offspring of a moment & tho. I may not have sufficiently explained the plan to your satisfaction as to its practicability yet I assure you it has received the sanction of men whose opinion can be relied on.

I am with best wishes

Your friend & ser^t

Frederic Tudor

Boston Feb^y 5th 1821

D^r Sir

On the 3^d inst. I received a letter from Mess^{rs} Marean & Furniss on the subject of the protest of your bills & from the contents I am induced to think they will refuse the payment of the freight money of the B^e Jane which I may expect to come along upon me to be paid here in the course of a short month. With this non payment will come loss & mortification great & keen. It will be the *final* stroke to our Ice business at S^t Thomas & S^t Pierre. To lift it up again is past my ability.

The last 12 months has changed the face of my affairs so greatly that from being as I thought a rich man I am almost a Bankrupt. The extensive depression of the sales of Ice has produced this state of things & I have not faith enough to look forward to better times. In Havana, my best market, the falling off has amounted to one half & in Charleston & Sava^a

one third & the undertaking in New Orleans is begun upon borrowed money & commences in sorrow & vexation, of which there needs no account.

The motives which urge me to exertion to revive these drooping concerns are of high character. They are as strong as can well be imagined to be given to a man, to scourge him to his highest effort. The aid & assistance which I have received from my brother Gardiner are very considerable but what is of greater importance is that I am indebted to your sisters, as your Brother Sam tells me \$3000 — their money it was which he lent me! Is it possible that I can be placed in a situation more cruel? Can a man be placed in a position where the obligation is more cogent? The distress & anxiety which I suffer is past the possibility of being expressed. I mention it to you in order that you may know the whole of the disasters which I have to sustain.

This situation of affairs being made known to you there arises the question, what is to be done?

For me to proceed any further is impossible. It is impossible for me to ship any more Ice. From this second non-payment of freight, as I have before said comes the expiring effort, in its payment here.

It seems that you can do no more. It is then done & finished. It would be well however to tell the government of Mart^{que} that in the course of 3 years we have lost \$25,000 — & that we are ruined & obliged to give the business up. To the government of St Thomas I would also write that that Island has now the last supply.

It is *possible* that these governments *may* do something; but it is a straw almost useless to catch at.

This sad retrospection & prospect is all the consolation we have & bitter enough it is. The abandonment of Marean & Furniss is neither unfair or unreasonable still I cannot but think they would consult their own interest in continuing some little aid in addition.

If I could realize here \$1200. — I think I could get out a large cargo to Mart^{que} but having exhausted my entire means & having involved myself in debts which I cannot discharge for a long time to come if ever; I am entirely without the power of proceeding.

It would be best in winding up these concerns to be as accurate as possible in shewing the exact account of all expenses & also of the receipts & next winter, if it should appear that a profit will arise, possibly some aid may be obtained here from friends.

So ends our efforts. I lament it as well on your acc^t as my own. It would have given me the most sincere pleasure to have participated with you in a profitable business; but circumstances having ordered it otherwise, we must endeavour to bear with as much calmness as possible unavoidable misfortunes.

I remain my dear C. yours
most truly,
Frederic Tudor

Step. Cabot Esq.

Nahant Aug^t 4th 1852

Mess^{rs} Weld & Minot

Gent^l

I have for above a year past been considering that it is time for me to make arrangements for infusing into my business of Ice some new strength; by engaging in it some younger men. It is becoming something of a wild beast, in its strength of growth, & requiring far more care & good management than I have either the will or the ability to give it.

I therefore wish to get assistance either to wind it up, which is difficult, or to continue it; under the direction of new heads: who may take advantage of my experience & lead it along (avoiding my mistakes) to new & far greater advantages, than I have ever realized. The unusual character of the business is that of "progress & advancement." It may be said of it — 1st "That wherever & whenever it has been introduced; in a place of sufficient population & prosperity; it has been *unsuccessful* at first. 2^d That this character has uniformly changed & profit has come & the demand increased, with time & habit. 3^d That it is every where still progressing & advancing; with each year; with new strength.

The present month it is forty seven years since I formed the plan & next Feb^y the same number of years since I went to sea with the first cargo, in a Brig, belonging to myself bound for S. Pierre, Martinique. I have thought I might yet work upon it, up to the half century: but as I am just upon the point of being sixty nine years of age, I prefer *now* to make the attempt, to infuse new youth, skill & energy, into a business: which I cannot but think, is of great promise, for the future: as well as of present good realization. That it is one whose risks are known, one wherein good practice & economy tell with great force: finally, one which cannot readily be gone into by others.

I have thought it might be of sufficient interest to your house to supply to the business what I inform you are its wants. — And gradually relieve me from much care & soon of all care; in the conduct of the business.

What I desire is to realize its present worth; but as neither you or any other responsible person would be willing to place me in such a position; as I should expect; I must continue my interest; giving to others the opportunity of an advance to profits derived from their own exertions: which should be more; or less: according to the risks they would be disposed to run. If it is for *mere* commissions, that they would come in; I should say I do not by such an arrangement secure what I want: because as I advance to old age: or die: I am without relief: or my heirs will be: when at a future time, I am less able to take anew the burden on my shoulders & heirs will make a poor hand in carrying on such a business. Some closer interest is therefore needed. It seems to me not necessary I should at this time enlarge upon this subject — I have made out an outline

& shall see how the matter strikes you: If agreeably further explanations will be made & with a view to this I am looking into the earlier period of the business in order to show from what it has advanced.

I am very truly yr. ob. s.

Frederic Tudor

Sources for Maritime History

It is remarkable to see how the items of manuscript material in a particular field, coming in over a period of years and from numerous sources, do, in the final analysis, dovetail together to form one unified collection. The result is like a piece of mosaic. This is the thing which fascinates the collector. Each item alone may seem more or less insignificant, but the whole is more complete because of the least significant part.

Among the many industries for which Baker Library has been collecting source material, the most romantic and colorful is undoubtedly the shipping industry. Recent acquisitions along this line have so added to the value of this group that it has become an outstanding collection in its field.

The earliest shipping records of any considerable extent came to the Society from Charles H. Taylor. They are the papers of Israel Thorndike and cover the years 1778-1818. Israel Thorndike was a shipping merchant of Beverly, trading primarily with the West Indies, though he also sent cargoes to England and Mediterranean ports as well as to the East Indies and Calcutta. The papers include letters, accounts of cargoes sold and invoices of goods purchased at various ports, accounts current with captains of vessels, insurance papers, etc. From these records it is possible to learn much about the character of American shipping in the days of its very beginning. We can see the extent to which the merchant was forced to rely on the sagacity of his supercargo, and we see something of the difficulties that confronted him in establishing contacts in foreign countries. Further, the papers in the collection relative to the French Spoliation claims indicate the problems American merchants had to face which were arising out of the Napoleonic Wars.

Another interesting group of shipping papers came to the Baker Library only recently. These are the records of Augustine Heard of Ipswich, Massachusetts. They run back to 1807, covering first

his travels as a supercargo for Boston and Salem merchants who were trading in the Far East, then his activities as a partner in the great shipping firm of Russell and Company, and finally his undertaking as an independent merchant. In 1836 he left Russell and Company and by 1840 he had become head of his own firm — Augustine Heard and Company, in which Coolidge and Kinsman were partners with him. In the later years of this company the business was carried on by four nephews of Augustine Heard — John, Augustine, Albert Farley, and George. The firm finally wound up in bankruptcy in the 'seventies. The first account book of Augustine Heard which we have is for the year 1807, when he was sailing as supercargo on the ship *William* on a voyage to Calcutta. His accounts of the trip are most systematic and complete. There were nineteen persons sharing in the adventure, investing anywhere from \$300 to \$20,000. The total amount transported in Spanish milled dollars was \$90,000, in addition to a considerable quantity of goods. He gives itemized accounts of the sales of goods shipped by various individuals and of the amounts paid for goods purchased with the returns. In the front of the book appear copies of the letters of instruction handed to him by the several individuals participating in the enterprise. We recognize quickly such names as Pickering Dodge, Nathan Robinson, Samuel Endicott, Joseph Lee, William Gray and Israel Thorndike. For the most part these men left much to the discretion of the supercargo, but occasionally, especially by those who had themselves been in the Orient, instructions were given to consult certain of the merchants in Calcutta. Ramdulollday was mentioned in several letters.

A collection of records running almost parallel to these in dates, but differing greatly in type of business, is that of the Tudor papers. Here again we see separate gifts dovetailing together to form a whole. Some years ago Charles H. Taylor gave thirteen volumes of the Tudor Company records covering the years 1860-1902. Just a few weeks ago Frederic Tudor, grandson of the great Ice King, deposited with Baker Library the manuscripts which completed the collection, extending the record back to 1804 with accounts of the first business efforts of Frederic Tudor. This collection embodies a most exciting story of the gigantic enterprise of introducing ice into the tropics. However, more will be said of this new collection elsewhere in this Bulletin. The records of the well known shipping merchant of Portsmouth, Jacob Wendell, cover nearly

the same period as the Heard and Tudor papers, and add information on the specializations of another shipping port of importance.

Another link in the history of American shipping is represented by a few volumes presented by Professor Ephraim Emerton. They are the account books of Ephraim and James Emerton, Salem merchants, for the years 1816 to 1835, and relate chiefly to trade with the pirate colony of Madagascar. American merchants were shipping hams, mackerel, rum, cotton goods, muskets, gunpowder, swords, epaulets, "rich fringe," lace, looking glasses, etc. (The pirates evidently had a strong streak of vanity.) The supercargo was buying for return freight tortoise shell, ivory, ebony, gum copal, gum arabic, raffia, pepper, horn, and hides.

The papers of Daniel W. Lord of Kennebunkport, Maine, for the years 1821-1873, constitute one of the few manuscript possessions the Library has that relates primarily to trade with Europe. In this group of papers such ports as Liverpool, Antwerp, Hamburg, Havre, and Cadiz are those to which most frequent reference is made.

For a later period the William Appleton and Company papers contribute much information of importance. They concern essentially the clipper-ship era, though there are also earlier papers of great interest. In addition to the account books and letter books of the Boston office there is a great mass of unbound papers, consisting to a large extent of letters and accounts current from agents in various parts of the world. Unlike most of the important firms of the earlier period, this company did not establish its own branches in foreign countries, but relied on establishments that were already going concerns to represent them as agents. Among the most important of these were: Augustine Heard and Company, and Russell and Company, Canton; Wolcott, Bates and Company, Shanghai; Russell, Sturgis and Company, and Peele, Hubble and Company, Manila; Martin Murray and Company, Bombay; and Baring Brothers, Liverpool and London. Carey and Company were their agents in New York, and J. C. Burnham and Company represented them throughout the South — New Orleans, Havana, etc. Mr. Henry Mellus was agent for the company in California, and less well known houses represented them in Matanzas, Pernambuco, Rio Janeiro, Antwerp, etc.

The firm William Appleton and Company was organized in 1841, when Samuel Hooper and James A. Appleton became partners of William Appleton. The company engaged in shipping the coarser

textile manufactures along with some raw cotton, grains, and lumber to China and the East Indies, in return for tea, silk, mattings, and rice from China; hemp, sugar, indigo, and coffee from Manila; Malacca tin, pepper, and coffee from Batavia. They bought coffee in Rio Janeiro which they exchanged in New Orleans for cotton to be shipped to Liverpool, sometimes taking cargoes of iron and steel products in exchange, to be brought back to the American market, but more often taking credit to be drawn on in China in payment for goods purchased there. They shipped cargoes of well assorted merchandise to California and brought back hides and gold.

William Appleton withdrew from the company in 1859. The business was carried on under the new name — Samuel Hooper and Company. Shipping continued to be the dominant interest for some time, but changes characteristic in the history of American shipping occurred, until by the 'seventies the chief investments of the company seem to have been in railroads and manufacturing.

Three other collections of the clipper-ship period are the records of Benjamin Newton of Boston, 1843-1864; Dane, Dana and Company also of Boston, 1852-1855; and Silsbee, Pickman and Allen of Salem, 1848-1893. The last named is of special interest, not only because of the extent of the collection, but because it serves well to bring out the essential difference between Boston and Salem shipping. Boston merchants sent homogeneous cargoes made up, for the most part, of textiles with a scattering of half a dozen other commodities. Salem merchants chose miscellaneous cargoes, including in the long list of goods shipped the following articles: kerosene, salmon, lobsters, tobacco, nails, axes, shovels, sewing machines, lamps, ploughs, wagons, doors, windows, chairs, tubs, clothes pins, as well as coarse textiles, such as denims and drills. Their imports were primarily from the Orient. From Calcutta came linseed, castor oil, shellac, India rubber, saltpeter, gunny cloth, jute, goat skins, and buffalo hides; from Chinese ports, matting, tea, sugar, lacquered ware, silks, chinaware, fans, etc. They also carried on extensive trade with South America, importing from Buenos Aires quantities of hides, wool, and horse hair.

Among the most interesting papers in this collection are the very complete records kept by the various captains. They give the full accounts of disbursements at every port visited. It is often possible to trace the complete history of a ship, including the cost of construction. Among the company's ships for which the records are

most complete are the *Formosa*, *Malay*, *Mindoro*, *Sooloo*, and *Panay*.

There have been mentioned here only the more extensive collections of shipping records. Individual volumes have been neglected, though they often contribute much of interest. Through the records mentioned we are supplied with some valuable material for every year from 1783 to 1893. The whole, however, constitutes only the history of the sailing craft in American shipping. The greatest weakness in the collection is the absence of any adequate records of a representative steamship company.

Hacienda Records

ALONG with the records of the general store of Alfred and Andres Lefebvre, which were given to the Society by Charles P. Howland and were mentioned in the May Bulletin, came a smaller group of accounts, those of the Hacienda de San Bartolomé del Monte, located in the Provincia de Tlaxcala, Mexico. This second group, which includes 27 volumes — journals, ledgers, and cash books — covers the period 1869-1905. The owner of the Hacienda, Don Manuel Fernandez del Castillo, is said to have been the head of one of the oldest and most distinguished families of Mexico and, from the account books, we gather a person of great wealth. On one page of the same account book from which the accompanying illustration was taken the accounts were balanced with the figures 9,699,508.86 pesos.

The produce of the hacienda included cattle, horses, mules, sheep, goats, pigs, wheat, corn, beans, potatoes, grass, bricks, and lumber. Another product of great importance was pulque, the fermented juice of the maguey, and a very popular drink in Mexico.

A study of these records would almost take one back to the feudal period. Here, as under the feudal system, the owner of the land assumed extensive obligations relative to the welfare of those dependent on him — in turn those dependents never became anything more than dependents. Among these were not only the laborers, who received from 6 to 125 pesos per month, but those members of the family who were in need. One other duty assumed by the head of the family was his responsibility toward the upkeep of the church. To this he gave heavily and in return received the



Que Plazo de esta fecha se cargan a la Reduccion por el de las Renterías de la Hacienda de San Bartolomé del Monte, el valor de los documentos en virtud de los cuales se han vendido las fincas comprendidas en el presente, y en igual número de folios que contiene este libro, que para su autenticación, presento: Don Manuel Fernandez del Castillo, el 13 de 1877.



R. J. del C. J.
J. M. Flores
Fiscal

En el día 13 de 1877, en la ciudad de San Bartolomé del Monte, a las 12 de la noche, se firmó el presente libro, y en su virtud se mandó que se guardase en el archivo de la Hacienda de San Bartolomé del Monte, para su autenticación, y para que sirviera de base para el pago de los impuestos que corresponden a las fincas comprendidas en el presente.

Por el Jefe de la Hacienda de San Bartolomé del Monte,
D. J. del C. J.
D. J. M. Flores

Septiembre 24 de 1869.

Diario

de las operaciones que sigan por negocios de la Srta Doña Teresa Mier de Fernandez del Castillo

Varios

Capital

El 15 de 1869 se imprimió el Capital que según el libro de 1869
Voluntad de 1869 presentase a dicho fincas en la Hacienda
de San Bartolomé del Monte, y en virtud de lo que se mandó
que se guardase en el archivo de la Hacienda de San Bartolomé del Monte, para su autenticación, y para que sirviera de base para el pago de los impuestos que corresponden a las fincas comprendidas en el presente.

5.	Casa N° 3 del Espiritu Santo		1,812,176 49
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca	55210 18	
7.	Casa N° 10 de la Filasoca		12100
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca	19586 38	
11.	Casa N° 11 de las Escalerillas		16296 46
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca	80000	
15.	Casa N° 9 de la 1.ª Sto. Domingo		12500
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca	22500	
19.	Casa N° 5 de la 3.ª Sr. Francisco		52000
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca	52000	
23.	Casa N° 12 de la Acequia		
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca		
27.	Casa N° 11 de Escucha		
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca		
31.	Casa N° 12 de Capuchinas		
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca		
35.	Casa N° 10 del Empedradillo		
	Valor en que le fué adjudicada esta finca		
Ouelta		517961 82	1,812,176 49

A PAGE FROM THE ACCOUNT BOOK OF THE
HACIENDA DE SAN BARTOLOMÉ DEL MONTE

blessing of the church. It is of interest here to note that the church of San Francisco in Tlaxcala, Mexico, is the first church erected on the American continent, and still contains the vestments, pulpit, font, and cedar ceiling brought from Spain in 1521.

The Trotter Manuscripts

AMONG the collections of business records brought together by the Business Historical Society and Baker Library there is one which is outstanding for its size, its completeness, and for the fact that it represents a longer period of time than any other single collection. This is the Trotter collection, the records of a family of Quaker merchants of Philadelphia. There are 1075 volumes of records which include some thirty different types of books. The whole group covers the years 1798-1916. The material has been mentioned before in the *Bulletin*, but no adequate description of the entire collection has appeared.

The Trotter manuscripts are important in that they comprise the records of a firm characteristic in many ways of the great mass of American business. The company was not spectacular either in its origin or its development, yet it was founded on sufficiently sound principles to insure its continuance for 142 years and it is still a going concern. The Trotter Company may be thought of as a company of metal importers, though the importance of that phase of the business varied greatly from time to time. The firm is distinctly a middleman's firm. They bought at wholesale and sold at wholesale.

We are told by the family that the company was first organized under the name of William Trotter in 1789. However, there are no records which antedate 1798. In the early years of the business William Trotter was closely associated with Joseph Sanson, for whom, we are told, William Trotter had worked as a boy. Joseph Sanson seems to have assumed the responsibility of establishing the credit of William Trotter abroad and of launching him out on new enterprises. By 1808 we find that William's younger brother, Nathan Trotter, was working for him and we know that in 1809 the name of the firm became William Trotter and Company. In 1813 the name was changed again to William and Nathan Trotter. In 1815 William Trotter died, while still a young man, and Nathan



THE NATHAN TROTTER AND COMPANY WAREHOUSE
Etching by Howard Cook

took over the responsibility of the company, the name being changed to Nathan Trotter and Company, under which it still exists.

Nathan Trotter and Company was a family partnership in which Nathan's brother Joseph was associated with him until 1830. Between 1830 and 1850 Nathan's two oldest sons, Edward H. Trotter and George Trotter, became partners and in 1850 owned equal shares with their father. In the year 1850 there was a reorganization of the company. Nathan Trotter retired from business and the two younger sons joined the partnership. The interests of the partners were as follows: Edward H. Trotter 30 per cent, George Trotter 30 per cent, William Henry 22½ per cent and Charles W. Trotter 17½ per cent. Since 1877 the company has been in the hands of sons of William Henry Trotter — Nathan Trotter, Edward H. Trotter and William Henry Trotter. At the time the papers were presented to the Library, William Henry Trotter was president of the firm, and it was through him that the records were given.

Since Nathan Trotter and Company is entirely a marketing organization, which both bought and sold at wholesale, its history had two primary phases — the source of goods purchased and the marketing area.

Taking up the first, we find that in the early years the firm dealt in a wide variety of commodities — cloth, leather, various kinds of metal and manufactured metal ware, mostly imported from English firms. Beginning with 1806 the continuous interruptions in trade caused by the Napoleonic Wars, and culminating in the War of 1812, led Trotter to first seek in this country goods formerly imported from England and later led him to establish trade with China and India. From China came tea, china, nankeens, silks, and shawls; from Calcutta came saltpeter, goat skins, indigo, and shellac.

After the War of 1812 trade was resumed with England and gradually the trade with India and China came to a close.

Nathan Trotter, the most dominant figure in the history of the company, early grasped the idea of specialization. The less important commodities began to disappear from the records. By the 'thirties the Trotter company was dealing primarily in iron, steel, copper, brass, and tin, imported from England and Wales. From 1830 on, the history of the company is largely the struggle between the imported metals and the domestic metals which were

continually increasing in quantity and quality of production. Imported metals continued to be predominantly from England and Wales, though from the 'fifties to the 'seventies large importations of Malacca tin were brought from Singapore, Banca tin from Rotterdam and iron from Russia. With the aid of the tariff, however, home producers were steadily replacing foreign producers in supplying the Trotter Company. By the 'nineties their only importations were of slab tin and these were decreasing in importance. In 1890 there were eighty such invoices, in 1907 there were two, and in 1912 thirteen.

In regard to the marketing area we see certain interesting changes. In the very early years sales of goods were made primarily to people near at hand and in small quantities, for many of their customers were blacksmiths. Soon, however, the marketing area was enlarged. By 1810 they were selling goods in Pittsburgh and other more distant points, but not without increased difficulty in collecting debts. In time Nathan Trotter and Company had many customers in the Middle West and it was once proposed to the company that they establish a branch office in San Francisco.

In 1877 there was an attempt to have goods, shipped from abroad and charged to them, consigned directly to their customers in Chicago, Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis and Pittsburgh. Though this method did not succeed at this time, we are told that at present the Trotter Company does not maintain a warehouse, but buys goods to be shipped directly to their customers.

The early records of the firm are clearly stamped as those of a Quaker merchant. Not only the quaint phrases of salutation, but the entire attitude make the letters stand apart from the usual business correspondence even of that day. The following transcriptions of two letters from one of the early letter books clearly illustrate this point:

Esteemed Friends

Philad^a July 31st 1812

Prischell & Schreiber

My last was of date 13 March — since which I have rec^d your esteemed favor of 15 May inclosing protest for non-acceptance for bill on Rob^t Torsey — the Indorsers here think it is probable that funds may yet go into the hands of the house in London.

As our two countries are now unhappily involved in a state of war, Trade and intercourse must consequently stop. I must beg your attention to my interest — a line from you would be satisfactory — how long this deplorable Calamity will last it is impossible at present to foresee, but

having now come in collision it is hoped all sides will see their interest in the blessing of Peace, and give us a speedy and honorable one.

With much regard, I remain your Friend

W. T.

Esteemed Friends
Bainbridge & Brown

Philad 8 May 1819

We have duly noticed the contents of all your letters and by the tenor & words of some of them we began to conclude that owing to the difficulty of the times and the distressed state of trade generally confidence was so exceedingly impaired that you had declined any other than cash business — We must confess we were disappointed in not receiving any copper at all and could only impute it to some fear in your minds as to the general result of these times of uncommon difficulty — and at first a little hurt as we were conscious our remittances had not been the most tardy and we had your acknowledgements that they had been satisfactory — upon a little reflection however we were glad that you had not sent any as we would much rather our friends would not credit us one cent than that they should create a particle of uneasiness in their minds by doing it and we have no doubt you acted as in your judgement you thought the existing state of things required and we think that you were perfectly right in doing so and as respects ourselves feel quite satisfied — things continue here in a very unsettled state and many are feeling the unpleasant effects of a business that has been entirely too extended for their actual means & not calculated to stand such times as these — We still think it will tend to bring matters to a proper level of security and that future operations, will be more guarded & more in proportion to the real capital employed — As to ourselves we dont know that we shall suffer much loss by the times, tho' as is generally the case we find many of our customers very tardy in payment, tho' but in few instances do we think we shall sustain any loss, and upon the score of indorsements or other guarantee we are not liable for one cent in any way or for any person — We write to you not as chance or temporary correspondents but as particular friends, who have extended credit to us more than we ever asked of any other house, and therefore we write openly and candidly and as our feelings dictate. . . . We shall probably write again in a few days. Meantime we are your assured friends,

/Signed/Nathan Trotter & Co

Such a collection as here described cannot but be of great value to business and economic research. At present one student is writing a doctor's dissertation from the material. The records are also to be used in the Philadelphia Price Study which is to form a part of the International Price Study.

Secretary's Column

ACQUISITIONS

Since the publication of the last Bulletin the Society has received and gratefully acknowledges the following acquisitions:

- From Austin F. Adams, Barre Plains, Massachusetts: complete records of the Barre Cheese Company, 1864-1897.
- From Arthur H. Churchill, Montclair, New Jersey: two invoices, December 11, 1811, covering shipments by Captain Joseph Hubbard.
- From Aaron Davis, San Diego, California: one account book, 1839-1844.
- From David S. Edwards, President, Saco-Lowell Shops, Boston: prints by Wm. B. Bement of machinery made by the Saco-Lowell Shops.
- From Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans: *Biennial Report of the Board of Curators, 1930-1931*.
- From Financial Secretary for Australia in the U. S. A., New York: *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1931*.
- From Charles E. Goodspeed, Boston: copy of a report and memoranda from the East India Company to a Parliamentary Committee relative to importations of cotton goods from India, 1778.
- From Richard N. Greenwood, President Heywood-Wakefield Company, Boston: *A Completed Century, 1826-1926*.
- From Walter Humphreys, Secretary National Association of Wool Manufacturers, Boston: bulletin of the Association, 1932.
- From Insurance Society of New York, Inc., New York: *Three Special Lectures* by William Quaid, Hugh H. Wolfenden, and George H. Phillips.
- From George A. Morison, Vice-President, Bucyrus Erie Company, East Milwaukee, Wisconsin: *The Excavating Engineer*, containing a history of the steam shovel.
- From L. C. Mosley, Sales Engineer, the Marion Steam Shovel Company, Marion, Ohio: *A Partial History of Power Shovel Development, 1837-1892*.
- From an officer of the Society: Hind, John R., *The Book of the Railway*, 1927; Frasca, Charles B., *Stock Swindlers and Their Methods*, 1931; Church, Samuel Harden, *The Liberal Party in America, Its Principles and Its Platform*, 1931; Kelly, Fred C., *How Shrewd Speculators Win, A Guide to Behavior When the Market Rises*, 1932; Scarborough, Harold E., *England Muddles Through*, 1932; *Examination Questions, Prepared by the Board of Examiners of the American Institute of Accountants*, 1932; Durham, Knowlton, *Billions for Veterans — An Analysis of Bonus Problems — Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, 1932; Baker, Charles Whiting, *Pathways to Prosperity*, 1932; Blanchard, Charles Elton, M.D., *A New Day Dawns*, 1932; one account book, accounts for the ship

- Nancy, 1800-1802 and accounts for ship *Montgomery*, 1806-1809; Levin, Jack, *Power Ethics: Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 1930-1931*; U. S. Department of Commerce, *Alaska Fishery and Fur Seal Industries in 1930*; Bloch, Louis, *Labor Agreements in Coal Mines*; National Industrial Conference Board, *Major Forces in World Business Depression*, and *Cost of Government in the United States, 1929-1930*; U. S. Government Printing Office, *Municipal Ownership of Street Railways in the District of Columbia, 1914*; and *American Documented Seagoing Merchant vessels of 500 Gross Tons and Over, 1931*; miscellaneous reports, documents, publications and advertisements.
- From Charles Walcott, Treasurer, Newmarket Manufacturing Company, Boston: one letter book, 1827-1830.
- From H. M. Walton, Librarian, Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, Newark, New Jersey: *Forbes Epigrams, 1000 Thoughts on Life and Business*; The Spectator Company, *Letters of "Amicus"*; Williams, C. F., *Find Where the Money Is, 1932*; Thomason, Mehran K., *The Springs of Human Action, 1927*.
- From Mrs. John D. R. Woodworth, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts: *Philippine Railways*, a pamphlet; map of the Philippines, 1905.
- From Secretary, Chamber of Manufactures, Sydney, Australia: nine pamphlets on various aspects of Australian industry; *The Manufacturers Bulletin*, December, February, and March.
- From Dr. Wilhelm Braumüller, Universitäts-Verlagsbuchhandlung, Wien, Austria: *Ein Wiener Buchdrucker*, a testimonial to Doctor Friedrich Jasper on his 80th anniversary.
- From Hudson's Bay Company, London, England: *Annual Reports and Reports of Proceedings*, completing file from 1900 to 1932.
- From The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, England: *A Link of Empire, or 70 Years of British Shipping, 1839-1928*.
- From Deutsches Reichsbahn-Gesellschaft, Berlin, Germany: *Operating Report of the German Imperial Railroad Company of the 7th Year, 1931*.
- From Kreditversicherungsbank A. G., Berlin, Germany: company reports and other publications relating to financial operations.
- From Herman Gunther Rathenau, Berlin-Gruenwald, Germany: four volumes of *Osram-Nachrichten* of Berlin.
- From H. Coupennie, A. G., Mulheim, Germany: bank reports and *Annual Report of the Reichsbank, 1929*.
- From Hawaiian Historical Society, Honolulu: *Fortieth Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society*.
- From Secretariat, N. V., Amsterdamsche Leder Maatschappij, Oisterwijk, Holland: jubilee books and records.
- From De Twentysche Bank N. V., Amsterdam, Holland: *Annual Report, 1931*.
- From Dr. G. J. Otten, Secretaris, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands: *Jaarverslag van de Kamer van Koophandel en Fabrieken voor Friesland*.

- From New Zealand Government Statistician, Wellington, N. Z.: statistical reports.
- From Volkart Brothers, Winterthur, Switzerland: File of *V. B. News*.
- From Edward F. Stephenson, Secretary New York Central Lines, New York: *Report of the Board of Directors of the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway Company, December 31, 1931*.
- From the Secretary, De Handelsvereeniging Te Batavia, Batavia, Java: annual reports of the Batavia Commercial Association and the Batavia Exporters Association for the years 1930 and 1931.
- From Bethlehem Steel Company, Inc., Bethlehem, Pa.: a collection of photographs of mechanical devices in use in the Bethlehem Steel Company.
- From C. H. Clark, Secretary, United States Institute for Textile Research, Inc., Boston: a complete run of bound volumes of the *Textile Manufacturers Journal*, *Textile World Journal*, and the *Textile World*, from date of the first issue of the *Textile Manufacturers Journal* to 1929.
- From Victor S. Clark, Consultant in Economics, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.: Clark, Victor S., *How Recovery Came from Past Depressions*, speech, 1932; *Past Crises in Retrospect and in Contemporary Opinion*, speech, 1932.
- From Miss Elizabeth C. Coburn, Lowell, Massachusetts: miscellaneous bills, receipts, etc., 1860-1900. Also a number of school books covering the period 1832-1869, intended for deposit with Widener Library.
- From Mrs. Helen T. Fuller, Ashuntully Farm, Tyringham, Massachusetts: four account books of Milton Judd of Tyringham, covering the period 1825-1882. The ledger contains an inventory of his estate and his will.
- From The B. F. Goodrich Company, Akron, Ohio: brief historical sketches of various industries prepared by The B. F. Goodrich Company.
- From F. A. Gosnell, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C.: *Census of Hotels*, 1930; *Unemployment Census*, Vol. 1, 1930; *Agricultural Census*, Vol. 1, 1930; *Population, Number and Distribution of Inhabitants*, 1930, Vol. 1; Vol. 3, parts 1 and 2.
- From Mrs. Edith F. Greenwood, Lynn, Massachusetts: papers from the estate of Doctor Louis C. Hatch of Bangor, Maine, concerning the affairs of Amos Patten for the period 1811-1844.
- From Doctor James M. Henry, Provost Lingman University, Canton, China; an account book of Gideon Nye, Macao, 1858-1861; an account book of Nye and Company, Macao, 1864-1870.
- From Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: fifteen photographs of labor saving machinery installed by this company.
- From Robert Maclehose and Company, Limited, Glasgow, Scotland: Maclehose, James, *The Glasgow University Press, 1638 to 1931*.
- From Mrs. Charles Miles, Lowell, Massachusetts: domestic bills and receipts relating to the estate of Horatio Marshall, 1850-1856, and a daily memorandum book of labor on the farm.

- From G. T. Mogan, President, Willapa Oysters, Inc., Seattle, Washington: *Oyster Farming for Profit at Willapa Bay*, 2nd edition, 1932.
- From Monroe Calculating Machine Company, Inc., Orange, New Jersey: exterior and interior photographs of the plant of this company.
- From Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, Newark, New Jersey: Marden, Orison Swett, *Rising in the World*, 1894; Ramsay, Robert E., *Effective House Organs*, 1920; Lawrence, J. D., *The Best Income Investment*, 1921; Brooks, C. Harry, *The Practice of Auto-suggestion*, 1922; Maclean, Joseph B., *Life Insurance*, 1924; Moody, John, *Profitable Investing*, 1925.
- From the National Association of Wool Manufacturers, Boston: bulletin for July, 1932.
- From Howard S. Russell, secretary, Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, Waltham: six account books, complete records of the Tuttle farm at Acton, Massachusetts, from 1883 to 1925.
- From Seaboard Air Line Railway, Norfolk, Virginia: copies of indentures, leases, and other miscellaneous documents relating to the Seaboard Air Line Railway — 66 items.
- From Henry L. Shattuck, Boston: twelve insurance policies, issued in favor of Henry Lee, during the period 1845-1865.
- From Harry R. Sinclair, president, Worcester Stamped Metal Company, Worcester, Massachusetts: catalogs of Bliss and Williams and E. W. Bliss Company, 1873-1881; catalogs of safety devices and safe practices; various photostats and photographs; three volumes, *Masterpieces of the Centennial Exhibition*, prepared by Joseph M. Wilson, published by Gibbe and Barrie.
- From Ralph M. Snell, Hurlburt Paper Company, South Lee, Massachusetts: a file of *Superior Facts* from December, 1930, to date.
- From Western Pennsylvania Historical Survey, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, vol. 14, Nos. 1-4, inclusive; vol. 15, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, 1932.
- From an officer of the Society: Nash, J. B., *Spectatoritis*, 1932; Brookings, Robert S., *The Way Forward*, 1932; Vernon, Cay, *Modern Business Letters*, 1932; Lee, Thomas F., *Latin American Problems*, 1932; Waldman, Seymour, *Death and Profits*, 1932; Sherrod, Julian, *The Autobiography of a Bankrupt*, 1932; National Industrial Conference Board, Inc., *A Picture of World Economic Conditions at the Beginning of 1932*; *The Banking Situation in the United States*, 1932; Geier, George J., B.C.S., and Mautner, Oscar, C.P.A., *Systems Installation in Accounting*, 1932; The Hudson Coal Company, *The Story of Anthracite*, 1932; Hoxie, George L., *Men, Money and Mergers*, 1932; Crowther, Samuel, *A Basis for Stability*, 1932; United Directory Corporation, *United Classified Business Directory 1932*; The Bankers Service Company, Boston, *Directory of Directors in the City of Boston and Vicinity 1931*; Morgan, John J. B., and Webb, Ewing T., *Making the Most of your Life*, 1932; Geran, Graeme O.,

A History of the Detroit Street Railways, 1931; Babcock and Wilcox Company, New York, *Steam, Its Generation and Use*, 1901; Meriden Britannia Company, West Meriden, Connecticut, Appendix to Catalogue, 1873; Hildreth, R., *Banks, Banking and Paper Currencies*, 1840; Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway, *Coal and Coke*, 1888; Tiffany and Company, *Tiffany Blue Book*, 1906; *Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances*, 1866; price lists, prices current, various pamphlets, bills, photographs, magazines, continuations, and other material.

From Bayerische Hypotheken-und Wechsel-Bank, München, Germany: annual reports for the years 1924 to 1931 inclusive.

From Cantieri Riuniti Dell' Adriatico, Trieste, Italy: Cantieri Navale Triestino — Monfalcone, 1929 — VII; Cantieri, Riuniti Dell' Adriatico, Numbers 5 and 7, for Maggio and Luglio, 1932; Canno storico sull' attività, marzo, 1932.

From Census and Statistics Office, Wellington, New Zealand: *Statistical Report of Trade and Shipping in the Dominion of New Zealand, 1931, Part 1*.

From Central Bureau of Statistics, Gravenhage, Holland: *Manual of Statistics*, June, 1932.

From Czechoslovak Consulate General, New York City: seven publications dealing with the business and economic conditions of Czechoslovakia; various government publications relating to Czechoslovakia.

From Credito Italiano, New York City: Mortara, Prof. Giorgio, *Prospettive Economiche*, 1932.

From Deutsche Ueberseeische Bank, Berlin: annual reports for the years 1929, 1930, and 1931.

From Dresdner Bank, Dresden: annual reports for the years 1928, 1929, 1930, and 1931; by-laws.

From "Fiat," Societa Anonima, Torino, Italy: the following publications of this company: *Anniversary Album*; *Anniversary Advertising*; reports; and other publications.

From "Idéal" Tannerie de Wiltz, Wiltz, Luxemburg: reports of the Chamber of Commerce, covering the years 1923-1931 inclusive; *Rapports et Bilan de l'Exercice*, 1931.

From "Italia," Flotte Riunite Cosilich, Lloyd Sabaudo, Navigazione Generale Anonima Sede in Genova, Genova, Italy; descriptive brochures and other forms of advertising material now in use.

From N. V. Hugo Kaufman & Co.'s Bank, Amsterdam, the Netherlands: annual reports for the years 1923-1931 inclusive.

From S. C. Knappert, secretary of the International Association for Rubber, Amsterdam, the Netherlands: *Eighteenth Annual Report*, 1931; *Ninth Annual Report — Propaganda Department*, 1931; *Particulars Concerning Rubber Cultivation in the Netherlands Indies*.

- From London Chamber of Commerce, Inc., London, England: *Annual Report (fiftieth)*; and *Monetary Policy*.
- From Lübeck-Büchener Eisenbahngesellschaft, Lubeck, Germany: *Jahresbericht*, 1931.
- From Melbourne Harbor Trust Commissioners, Melbourne, Australia: *Fifty-fifth Annual Report*.
- From "Montecatini" Societa Generale per l'Industria Mineraria ed Agricola, Milano, Italy: annual report for 1931 and prospectus of the society of earlier date.
- From National Bank of Czechoslovakia, Doctor Bohumil Vlasák, Government Commissioner, Prague: three annual reports of the bank for the year 1931 and minutes of the sixth annual general meeting held on February 29, 1932.
- From Navigazione Generale Italiana, Genova, Italy: *L'Organizzazione La Flotta — I Servizi*, March, 1930.
- From Nederlandsch Indische Handelsbank, Amsterdam, Netherlands: *Verslag aan de Algemeene Vergadering van Aandeelhouders op 24 Juni 1932 over Boekjaar 1931*.
- From Norges Bank, N. Rygg, Governor, Oslo, Norway: report of the bank for the year 1931 and summary of the report by Mr. Rygg.
- From Hermann Gunther Rathenau, Berlin: three memorial volumes — KaDeWe, on its 25th anniversary, April, 1922; the printing and publishing house, R. Boll, on its 60th jubilee, 1923; *25 years of Grunewald-Gymnasium*, issued in 1928; copies of *Osram-Nachrichten*, for May, June, and July.
- From Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft, Aktiengesellschaft, Berlin: annual reports, 1926-1931 (in German); annual reports, 1926-1930 (in English); comparison of stock quotations from January, 1930 to July, 1931 (in German); comparison of stock quotations from January, 1930 to July, 1931 (in English); Germany's economic development for the years 1929-1931, inclusive (in English; *Effektivverzinsung deutscher festverzinslicher Werte*, January, 1930 to May, 1932 inclusive.
- From Schultheiss-Patzenhofer, Berlin: two copies of *Geschäftsbericht der Schultheiss-Patzenhofer Brauerei-Aktiengesellschaft*, September, 1930.
- From Smyrna Chamber of Commerce, Smyrna, Turkey: *Bulletin de la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Smyrne*, March-April, 1932.
- From Societa Triestina di Navigazione, Trieste, Italy: illustrated publication, *The Lloyd Triestino, 1833-1926*.
- From Swiss Locomotive and Machine Works, Winterthur, Switzerland: *Denkschrift sur Vollendung der Locomotive No. 2000*, June, 1909.
- From Vereinigte Stahlwerke Aktiengesellschaft, Düsseldorf, Germany: *Report of the Sixth Business Year, 1930-1931*.